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ABSTRACT

Brought together are two fact sheets on the supply of and demand for physical therapists and occupational therapists. The fact sheets cite statistical data from the National Easter Seal Society, the American Physical Therapy Association, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. The cited facts focus on the need to recruit and retain rehabilitation professionals, the status of physical therapy education programs, and the status of personnel preparation in occupational therapy. A list of 13 suggested readings is also included. (JDD)

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Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy: Suggested Readings

Physical Therapy: Supply/Demand--Some Facts

and

Occupational Therapy: Supply and Demand --Some Facts

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
The Supply/Demand Analysis Center
The Council for Exceptional Children
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Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy: Suggested Readings

Ad Hoc Commission on Occupational Therapy Manpower. (1985). Occupational therapy manpower: A plan for progress. Rockville, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.

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American Occupational Therapy Association Task Force. (1986). Guidelines of occupational therapy services in school systems: Report of the School Systems Task Force to the Commission of Practice. Rockville, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association.

American Physical Therapy Association. (1988). Physical therapy education: Physical therapist entry-level programs. Alexandria, VA: Author.

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Henderson, A. (1986). Occupational therapy task force report. Boston: Boston University, Sargent College.

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McLaughlin, M.J., Smith-Davis, J., & Burke, P. J. (1986). Personnel to educate the handicapped in America: A status report. College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children and Youth.

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McLaurin, S. E. (1984). Preparation of physical therapists for employment in the public schools: A new approach. Physical Therapy, 64, 674-677.

National Easter Seal Society. (1988). Crisis ahead: Recruitment and retention of rehabilitation professionals in the nineties and beyond. Chicago, IL: Professional Advisory Council, National Easter Seal Society.

Office of Special Education Programs. (1988). Tenth annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Education of the Handicapped Act. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. ED 294410

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February 1989

Readings/OT-PT: #15

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PHYSICAL THERAPY: SUPPLY/DEMAND -- SOME FACTS

A report on recruitment and retention of rehabilitation professionals published by the National Easter Seal Society (1988) states that:

- o In 1984, the Brandeis University Health Policy Center predicted that by 1995 the United States would need 42 percent more physical therapists than were employed in 1984.
- o In 1986, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that physical therapy and physical therapy assistant services will become the third and fourth fastest growing occupations through the year 2000.
- o Physical therapy is a low supply/high demand area; the shortage of physical therapists is more critical than the shortage of occupational therapists.
- o Additional physical therapy positions have become available as the field has moved into such new areas of obstetrics/gynecology, gerontology, ergonomics, sports medicine, and cardiac rehabilitation.

The recent report on physical therapy education prepared by the American Physical Therapy Association (1988) states that:

- o In 1988, there were 121 accredited entry level physical therapist education programs in the United States. Of these, 97 are baccalaureate programs. Since 1970, there has been a 150 percent increase in the number of physical therapist education programs, from 48 to 121.
- o In 1987-88, there were 10,893 students enrolled in physical therapy education programs.
- o Since 1980, there has been a continuous increase in the number of graduates from physical therapy education programs. In 1987, there were 4,062 graduates (1,613 more than in 1980).

- o A strong majority (63 percent) of the faculty in physical therapy education programs have taught in these programs for ten or fewer years. Faculty members are predominately female (62 percent), 40 years of age or younger (60 percent), and Caucasian (93.7 percent).

REFERENCES AND ADDRESSES

American Physical Therapy Association. (1988). Physical therapy education: Physical therapist entry-level programs. Alexandria, VA: Author.

APTA, 1111 North Fairfax, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

National Easter Seal Society. (1988). Crisis ahead: Recruitment and retention of rehabilitation professionals in the nineties and beyond. Chicago, IL: Professional Advisory Council, National Easter Seal Society.

National Easter Seal Society, 70 East Lake Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601. The report is $5.00.

January 1989

Physical Therapy 215

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Occupational Therapy: Supply and Demand

Some Facts

Results of a 1987 survey of personnel preparation programs in occupational therapy, reported by the American Occupational Therapy Association (1988) include the following information on the status of programs and graduates for 1987:

- In 1987, 66 schools offered accredited programs in occupational therapy. This was an increase of two over 1986 and an increase of 11 since 1980.
- There were 7,697 students enrolled in professional level programs in occupational therapy in 1987. This number represents a decrease of 0.4 percent from the previous year.
- The average increase in enrollment in bachelor's degree programs has been 1 percent for each year between 1983 and 1987. The average increase in enrollment in professional master's degree programs during the same period was 6.3 percent.
- Members of ethnic minority groups comprised 9.3 percent of students in occupational therapy training in 1987.
- There were 2,229 graduates of occupational therapy programs in 1987. This is an increase of 4 graduates over 1986. Between 1980 and 1987, the number of graduates increased by 322. Program directors predicted 2,431 graduates in 1988.
- There were 408 full-time faculty members teaching in occupational therapy education programs in 1987; 8.8 percent of these were members of ethnic minority groups.
- In 1987, 64 schools offered approved technical level programs. These programs were preparing 2,878 occupational therapy assistants, 18.9 percent of whom were members of ethnic minority groups. These numbers represent increases over the previous year, including 7 more schools, 8.7 percent more students, and 2.4 percent more students from ethnic minority groups.

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- In 1987, 962 students graduated from programs preparing occupational therapy assistants, an increase of 46 over the previous year. The number of graduates from approved programs has remained relatively stable since 1980, with between 856 and 994 being graduated each year.

A report on the recruitment and retention of rehabilitation professionals published by the National Easter Seal Society (1988) contains the following data:

- Between 1972 and 1982, the number of occupational therapists in the United States increased by 135 percent, and the number of occupational therapy assistants increased by 199 percent.

- An estimated 35,600 occupational therapists and 76,800 occupational therapy assistants are currently in the work force.

- There is an apparent reserve pool of 5,200 occupational therapists and 4,600 assistants, whose employment status is unclear and who may be temporarily out of the work force.

- The Northeastern and North Central states have the greatest supply of occupational therapists. The West Coast supply is about average. Shortages exist in the Southeastern and South Central states.

- The ideal ratio is 21.8 therapists per 100,000 population. The current distribution ranges from 2.5 therapists per 100,000 in Mississippi to 33.5 therapists per 100,000 in New Hampshire.

- While supply remains steady, the demand for occupational therapists and assistants is increasing. Factors contributing to demand include: (a) increased awareness of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities; (b) the higher ages of the population and increases in the "frail elderly"; (c) enactment of PL 94-142 and expansion of Medicare; (d) greater survival of accidental trauma and severely disabling conditions at birth; and (e) advances in medical technology which enlarge the client base.

REFERENCES AND ADDRESSES

American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (1988). 1988 education data survey final report: Survey of 1987 educational programs. Rockville, MD: AOTA Research Information and Evaluation Division.

* American Occupational Therapy Association, 1383 Piccard Drive, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

National Easter Seal Society. (1988). Crisis ahead: Recruitment and retention of rehabilitation professionals in the nineties and beyond. Chicago, IL: Professional Advisory Council, National Easter Seal Society.

* National Easter Seal Society, 70 East Lake Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601. The report is $5.00.

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